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MY RECOLLECTION AS AN AGENT OF THE CANON ORGAN^{BY} HAN To-pong

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Author's Background

[HAN To-^bpong (7281/6670/1496) worked for the Harbin branch of Bank of Korea for about 10 years until September 1926. He then went to Shanghai and became a government worker when the Greater Korea Provisional Government was set up with KIM Ku (6855/0046) as its chairman. At that time HAN, KIM and PAK Yol (2613/3525) devoted their time to the liberation and independence of the Korean nationals. To raise money for this undertaking, HAN established a trading firm called Hui-hsin Yang-hsing which mostly handled Kailun coal. It was about that time that HAN began his intelligence activities. HAN's real name is WI Hye-yim (7279/1920/2651)(Hayrim Wee) by which he was known in Japan and by the Canon Kikan (Canon Organ). HAN cooperated with the Japanese Army and the Chinese Government's intelligence operations in Shanghai for the purpose of realizing liberation and independence for his fatherland. He went home to Seoul when the liberation and independence were realized in August 1945. He then had to fight for the "unification of the fatherland." For this purpose, he returned to Shanghai and continued activities with KIM. In October 1945, CIC commander, Lieutenant Colonel Henry who was under the command of Lieutenant General Woodmire ^{WEDEMCKE} [phonetic], US Army Headquarters in Shanghai, sought out KIM and asked him to "pick a most trustworthy person to cooperate with CIC." KIM then introduced HAN to Lieutenant-Colonel Henry and thereafter became a newspaper translator under him. HAN is proficient

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in Korean, English, Russian, Japanese, and Chinese languages. HAN's conviction was that without the unity of the 600,000 compatriots in Japan the unification of the fatherland cannot be effected. Consequently, he wanted to go to Japan. The chance came when he was transferred to Lieutenant Colonel Henry's friend, Lieutenant Colonel Canon's organ.]

Real Nature of the Canon Organ

The Canon Organ was not under the command of the GHQ, the CIA, or the 6th Army G-2. It was formed under the CIC controlled directly by the SCAP, G-2. Because of the nature of its objective, its existence was kept secret. It could, however, be said that the Canon Organ was directly connected with Allen Dulles from the intelligence-supplying viewpoint.

Hitherto it has been frequently reported that the Canon Organ's head office was located at the Hongo House in Tokyo. This is not true. The Hongo House was used for quartering the Canon Organ personnel and for entertaining guests. Lieutenant Colonel Canon's residence was located directly in front of Yamate Byoin (Bluff Hospital) in Yokohama. The Canon Organ was staffed with about 30 persons. The Hongo House pantry was always stocked with foodstuff to be given away to Japanese guests and their families.

The organizational structure of the Canon Organ was as follows:

SCAP

CIA

Canon Organ
(30 persons)

GHQ

1st

Colonel Canon's Edqs

- Counter-Soviet Section
(Three infiltration agents)
- Counter-Communist China Section
(Seven infiltration agents)
- Counter-North Korean Section
(Three infiltration agents)
- Counter-Japan, Rightists, Leftists Section
(About 10 persons)
- Red Purge Section (About 10 persons)

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Note: Needless to say, each of the organization shown in the chart above had behind-the-scene information peddlers which is reported to number more than 100.

Framework of Intelligence Operations in Japan

The Canon Organ placed most emphasis on operations against Communist China. It carried on important operations against Communist China from about a year prior to the outbreak of the Korean war. The Counter-Soviet Section was not too active but it concentrated its operations against Sakhalin. The said section, however, succeeded in infiltrating three agents into Sakhalin. The North Korean Section and the Communist China Section succeeded in infiltrating three and seven agents into their responsible areas respectively. Okinawa was used as a midway base to land agents into Fukien, Kuangtung, and Chekiang provinces and Shanghai. All of the agents were ex-militarymen.

I am sorry I cannot reveal the names and activities of the Canon Organ personnel who conducted operations with the exception of SEKIGUCHI Mitsuru (7070/0656/3341).

For each area, an agent who conducted an operation had to return to the original place of departure within a month. Each received 100,000 to 150,000 yen for each operation. If more money was needed, Lieutenant Colonel Canon did not hesitate to do so to the intelligence agents with good records. Since the compensations were not sufficient for such a risky business, the agents conducted smuggling trade semi-overtly under the protection of the Canon Organ. This had been uncovered as the "private navy" and the "mysterious smuggling trade ships" cases.

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Many ships transported agents and also conducted smuggling trade. To prevent double spies, the Canon Organ checked the background of the crew members.

After unloading agents and completing transaction of goods, the ships had to wait off-shore for wireless contacts to get the agents back on the ships. Many crewmen did not quit such a risky job because goods brought over from Japan could be sold four or five times the original prices.

Canon always insisted that the agents "make cool observations, ask no questions, and carry no documents." Carrying documents arouse suspicion was his view. The information which the agents saw and heard in cities and villages were recorded in detail after their return. No matter how long it took, the agents had to write the reports in front of Canon.

There were also many information peddlers who frequented the Canon Organ. If each was promised 10,000 yen for the information, he was paid 2,000 yen at a time until the information he submitted had been verified as true.

KAJI Case Was a Failure

What about the KAJI Wataru Case? Definitely Lieutenant Colonel Canon asked for Kaji's cooperation in gathering information on Communist China. It has been wrongfully stated that Kaji was illegally confined and assaulted. On the contrary, Canon took very good care of Kaji and gave him streptomycin to take care of his tuberculosis. According to my recollection, it was Kaji who requested to go to Okinawa. The so-called Kaji Case was irresponsibly reported by YAMADA Zenjiro (1472/3944/0810/0059/6745) who was a houseboy at the Hongo House. The Kaji Case, however, was a failure for the Canon Organ. I told Canon that he overestimated Kaji and that Kaji went to Okinawa because he wanted to, and that we should adjudicate that Kaji was bribed by the Japanese Communists.

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[Shunkan Shincho Editorial Board Note: "Regarding this point, Kaji
said that he received 100 boxes of streptomycin from Edgar Snow and A. Smedley
when they visited Japan, that when the Canon Organ illegally detained him, he
was given injection because they did not want ^{him} to die, that ^{he} did not request
for the Okinawa trip, and that he never heard of an agent called HAN To^b-~~ong~~."]

What Kind of A Person Is Lieutenant Colonel Canon?

According to the then Superintendent of the Metropolitan Police Board,
TANAKA Eiichi (3944/0022/2837/0001), he said, "When my wife and I were invited
to Canon's home for dinner, we saw Canon grab a cat, twist its neck, and throw
it against the ceiling to kill it. Canon was a person who took pot shots at
any kind of animal." We don't know which one, Mr. or Mrs. Tanaka said this,
but it was so reported by the journalists. It was also reported that Canon
is very quick on the draw that he was known as "Kid Canon."

Canon, however, was not a cruel man. He was a typical good-natured
American and sympathetic. He was very good to his wife. Whenever he went to a
cabaret or nightclub, he always phoned home to let his wife know when he is
coming home. The then National Rural Police Director, SAITO Noboru (7871/
5671/2573) and Cabinet Research Chamber Director, MURAI Jun (2625/0064/4783)
know about this.

Canon once twisted his leg and walked with a limp. At about the same
time, Lieutenant Colonel Shagnon [phonetic] was also limping, so many people
thought the two were one and the same man.

Lieutenant General Clark warned the Canon Organ because he was worried
about the cropping up of mysterious incidents. Canon told him off with, "My
father is Allen Dulles."

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Being such a bullsh

person, once he said "OK" he would risk his neck to take charge of the matter. Once he said "NO" no one even the GHQ could move him.

When Canon left Japan in 1952, he did not stay at his home in Texas. He stayed for a while and ~~was~~ ordered by Allen Dulles to the war areas in Middle and Near East with Cairo as his headquarters. Now he is active in Turkey with Ankara as the headquarters. No matter where he is, he sends me Christmas card each year.

It was ~~the responsibility of~~ Canon's subordinates which made him ~~regard~~ ~~others as~~ "a cruel man." Most of the 30 persons under him were in captain's grade. But among them, the most difficult to deal with were Niseis. There are still many victims who cannot to this day forget Warrant Officer Victor Matsui (2646/0064), Sergeant Paul Hashimoto (2890/2609), and Sergeant George Tsuchida (0960/3944).

This Is the Way the "Private Navy" Operated

The "Private Navy" did not include only the Dai-Ichi Kaiyo-Maru. To infiltrate agents into Communist China, the Canon Organ selected Okinawa as its base. Many ships were needed to travel between Japan and Okinawa. They included Igasa-Maru, Dai-Ni Shirataka-Maru, Dai-Jushichi Myojin-Maru, and Kisaragi-Maru. They transported KIKUYAMA (5468/1472), former army major general OKADA (1481/3944), and NAGAOKA (7022/1481) as agents to infiltrate into mainland China.

Let me now put a spot light on the Igasa-Maru Case. In August 1949, the ringleader SHIOTANI Eisaburo (7770/6253/2837/0005/6745), 49 years old, ex-Japan Communist Party central committeeman, and NITTA Ryo (2450/3944/0081), an official at Toho Tsusho Kaishia (Oriental Trading Company) thought it advantageous

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for them to make an advent toward China and convinced the bigwigs at Matsushita Denki Boeki Kaisha (Matsushita Electrical Appliances Trading Company) that "this is a legal trade based on a special permit of the Occupation forces" and had them furnish money and export goods and readied the Igasa-Marui Plan.

The Igasa-Marui left the Port of Osaka on 4 October 1949. Enroute to Port of Won^g-san, the ship stopped at Port of Hakata and picked up a Nisei officer, a Chinese called CH'EN (7115) and a Korean called CHO(2580). The Nisei officer debarked from the ship off Shimane Prefecture and the other two sneaked into the Port of Won^g-san on the night of 29 October.

The two collected for three weeks local newspapers and magazines, military information on Chinese Communist army strength, military and social conditions in North Korea, and military information on Communist China. CHO stayed in Won^g-san and CH'EN headed for the Port of Fushiki in Toyama Prefecture under the order of the Canon Organ. Enroute, the ship confronted typhoon and arrived at the Port of Tanabe, Wakayama Prefecture.

The captain of the ship thought that since it is his home town, they could get out of it somehow if they got caught. The Canon Organ dispatched an MP jeep to the Port of Fushiki to protect them upon their arrival. This switch unavoidably made Canon Organ suspicious of the Igasa-Marui's action.

The owner of the ship unloaded the goods, divided up the profits and acted as if though nothing happened. But the smuggling case was uncovered due to an anonymous notification to the authorities.

Five years after the Peace Treaty went into effect in September 19⁵7, the 10th hearing on the Igasa-Marui Case was conducted. The defendant, NITTA, said,

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"It is true about the trading, but we received a permit from an undisclosed quarter to do this. The undisclosed quarter refers to the Occupation troop intelligence organ, the Canon Organ, located at Hongo, Tokyo. The permit was in a form of port exit permit in conjunction with intelligence operation, and in short, it was given on condition that we bring back intelligence from Communist China. This was told to me by SHIOTANI."

The procurator's view regarding this was, "The defendants, of course, were not forced to do spying. On the contrary, they attempted to make a huge profit by using the Canon Organ. In judging this case, we should not be deceived by intelligence collection. For example, if the defendants cooperated with the US Army's intelligence operational objective, the said act should have been done within the confine of the law. If it was conducted illegally, it is natural for them to be punished."

The Canon Organ might have fished for the Japanese people by using "smuggling" as the bait, or the gangs probably attempted to make a huge profit by using the Canon Organ. The two are related like a chicken to an egg.

I might be trying to clear myself but whenever the smuggling ship was caught by the police, the crewmen always mentioned my name, HAN To-^bpong, by saying "I don't know the detail, but please ask HAN To-^bpong, who is with the G-2."

Because of this, I was once taken to the Metropolitan Police Board as a smuggling suspect ^{at Moji} when Kisaragi-Maru which went to Okinawa, stopped at the Port of Moji because of an engine trouble. I was falsely accused when the crewmen mentioned my name.

I also have something to clear up about the Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru.

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Whereabouts of the Veteran Agent

This case was publicized to the public as follows: "Late at night on 20 August 1951, the 99-ton Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru left the Port of Nagasaki. The families of the ^(eight) crewmen and others did not know about the departure. It seems the ship went to Okinawa but actually the ship entered the Port of Tasuke at Hirato, ^d Nagasaki Prefecture on 11 October 1951 and stayed there for 13 days and then went to the Port of Ube in Yamaguchi Prefecture where the ship was loaded with 81 wicker-trunk-full of dark blue serge and 26 drums of diesel oil and ^{viny} ~~gas~~ oil and left the port on 20 October. Since then, nothing was heard about Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru and no one knows whether the crewmen are alive or dead."

It was also reported that "MIYAZAKI Yoshihiro (1362/1505/5328/1347), former employee of Kawanami Shipbuilding Company tried to charter Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru from its owner, ^e President TOSHIKAWA Motoji (2979/1557/0337/0059) of Toshikawa Suisan Kabushiki Kaisha (Toshikawa Marine Products Company), but Toshikawa turned him down. MIYAZAKI then asked for the ^b charter of the ship several times through the help of HAN To-^bpong working for GHR, G-2 and succeeded in signing contract on 10 July with HAN acting as the middleman (according to Nagasaki Maritime Safety Headquarters survey). However, I have never interceded for chartering the Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru or gone to [#] Nagasaki."

At the time I ~~was reportedly acted as the intermediary~~, it was reported, "Mr HAN said that they would all say that Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru will be used as a fishing vessel, but in actuality, the ship will carry out the order of the Occupation forces. But regarding this, Mr. TOSHIKAWA said that he doesn't know anything about it."

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Of course, Mr. TOSHIKAWA doesn't know because I did not act as an intermediary or said anything like that. It is, however, true that aside from the eight crewmen on Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru, another called SEKIGUCHI Mitsuru (7070/0656/3341) was on it. His pseudonym was TAKEBAYASHI Mitsuru (4554/2651/3341). He spoke Chinese fluently. During the war, he was attached to a strategic unit in mainland China. I know of him and met him several times since the Shanghai era.

After the war, I met SEKIGUCHI at the Yokohama G-2 office after his repatriation from China. Since his ability was discovered by Lieutenant Colonel Canon around 1948, he had done outstanding jobs.

In November 1949, SEKIGUCHI landed at Won-san, North Korea and obtained information about North Korean troops sending a large number of tanks and guns southward. This information was made known to Canon immediately, but Canon interpreted it as "a move to guard the border area." Canon, however, reported this information to Washington. Then the Korean war broke out six months later.

Because of this accurate information, Lieutenant Colonel Canon's prestige rose among the GHQ and CIC officers and SEKIGUCHI's ~~status~~ rose also. Since that time, SEKIGUCHI infiltrated into Won-san three times. During the In-ch'on landing operation, the operation proved to be a great success because of the fact SEKIGUCHI supplied information on enemy concentration in the vicinity of In-ch'on, information on In-ch'on people's feeling toward the US troops and information on Communists activities. Because of this successful operation, General MacArthur gave commendation to Lieutenant Colonel Canon.

Because of the recognition of SEKIGUCHI's capability, Canon gave him an order to infiltrate into Communist China. This resulted in SEKIGUCHI's going

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aboard the Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru and his disappearance. His whereabouts are still unknown. My guess is that the said ship sank during a typhoon, but I got the feeling that the veteran intelligence agent, SEKIGUCHI, will suddenly show up somewhere someday.

Regarding the "Private Navy", during the Japan Socialist Party member, ISHIBASHI Masashi's (4258/2890/2398/0843) interpellation of the Japanese government side at the Lower House Special Security Treaty Committee meeting, he said this about the Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru and the "Private Navy": "If the Japanese Government doesn't know about it, it reveals the insincere activities on the part of the ^UUS. If the government knows about it, it is an expression of hostile policy toward China."

But the point of issue is the Dai-Ichi Kaiyo-Maru's "Progress Report on Fighting", "Sea Distress Report", and the photos of the Chinese Communist junk enflamed due to firing from the Dai-Ichi Kaiyo-Maru which ISHIBASHI brought along as evidences in his furoshiki bag. Where did he get all of them? From my experiences, I think they were all frauds. If they were concocted merely for the purpose of attacking the Security Treaty in the Diet, I can only say that there is a big subversion in existence in Japan.

Regarding the above-mentioned evidences, the editorial department of Shukan Shincho quoted ISHIBASHI saying as follows: "From a common sense view, how can I present groundless materials to the Diet? If I do that, I would be punished and will be criticized by the people. It would be a suicidal act for any Dietman. It is odd for a person connected with subversive activities to know any other thing except his own job. From the intelligence organ basis, it is a common sense not to know about anything else but your own job. It is not my business whether HAN said he had no connection with the Dai-Roku Toyo-Maru."

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Saying that the materials I used for evidences regarding the "Private Navy" is very presumptuous. Since I have concrete basis, I will wait for a right time to announce it."

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